

***THOMAS
BULFINCH***



***BULFINCH'S
MYTHOLOGY:
THE AGE
OF FABLE***

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Chapter I

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Introduction

The literature of our time, as of all the centuries of Christendom, is full of allusions to the gods and goddesses of the Greeks and Romans. Occasionally, and, in modern days, more often, it contains allusions to the worship and the superstitions of the northern nations of Europe. The object of this book is to teach readers who are not yet familiar with the writers of Greece and Rome, or the ballads or legends of the Scandinavians, enough of the stories which form what is called their mythology, to make those allusions intelligible which one meets every day, even in the authors of our own time.

The Greeks and Romans both belong to the same race or stock. It is generally known in our time as the Aryan family of mankind; and so far as we know its history, the Greeks and Romans descended from the tribes which emigrated from the high table-lands of Northern India. Other tribes emigrated in different directions from the same centre, so that traces of the Aryan language are found in the islands of the Pacific ocean.

The people of this race, who moved westward, seem to have had a special fondness for open air nature, and a willingness to personify the powers of nature. They were glad to live in the open air, and they specially encouraged the virtues which an open-air people prize. Thus no Roman

was thought manly who could not swim, and every Greek exercised in the athletic sports of the palaestra.

The Romans and Grecian and German divisions of this great race are those with which we have most to do in history and in literature. Our own English language is made up of the dialects of different tribes, many of whom agreed in their use of words which they had derived from our Aryan ancestry. Thus our substantive verb I AM appears in the original Sanscrit of the Aryans as ESMI, and m for ME (MOI), or the first person singular, is found in all the verbal inflections. The Greek form of the same verb was ESMI, which became ASMI, and in Latin the first and last vowels have disappeared, the verb is SUM. Similar relationships are traced in the numerals, and throughout all the languages of these nations.

The Romans, like the Etruscans who came before them, were neither poetical nor imaginative in temperament. Their activity ran in practical directions. They therefore invented few, if any stories, of the gods whom they worshipped with fixed rites. Mr. Macaulay speaks of these gods as "the sober abstractions of the Roman pantheon." We owe most of the stories of the ancient mythology to the wit and fancy of the Greeks, more playful and imaginative, who seized from Egypt and from the East such legends as pleased them, and adapted them in their own way. It often happens that such stories, resembling each other in their foundation, are found in the Greek and Roman authors in several different forms.

To understand these stories, we will here first acquaint ourselves with the ideas of the structure of the universe,

which the poets and others held, and which will form the scenery, so to speak, of the narratives.

The Greek poets believed the earth to be flat and circular, their own country occupying the middle of it, the central point being either Mount Olympus, the abode of the gods, or Delphi, so famous for its oracle.

The circular disk of the earth was crossed from west to east, and divided into two equal parts by the SEA, as they called the Mediterranean, and its continuation the Euxine.

Around the earth flowed the RIVER OCEAN, its course being from south to north on the western side of the earth, and in a contrary direction on the eastern side. It flowed in a steady, equable current, unvexed by storm or tempest. The sea, and all the rivers on earth, received their waters from it.

The northern portion of the earth was supposed to be inhabited by a happy race named the Hyperboreans [this word means "who live beyond the north" from the word "hyper," beyond, and boreas, the north wind], dwelling in everlasting bliss and spring beyond the lofty mountains whose caverns were supposed to send forth the piercing blasts of the north wind, which chilled the people of Hellas (Greece). Their country was inaccessible by land or sea. They lived exempt from disease or old age, from toils and warfare. Moore has given us the "Song of a Hyperborean," beginning

"I come from a land in the sun-bright deep,
Where golden gardens glow,
Where the winds of the north, becalmed in sleep,
Their conch-shells never blow."

On the south side of the earth, close to the stream of Ocean, dwelt a people happy and virtuous as the Hyperboreans. They were named the Aethiopians. The gods favored them so highly that they were wont to leave at times their Olympian abodes, and go to share their sacrifices and banquets.

On the western margin of the earth, by the stream of Ocean, lay a happy place named the Elysian Plain, whither mortals favored by the gods were transported without tasting of death, to enjoy an immortality of bliss. This happy region was also called the "fortunate fields," and the "Isles of the Blessed."

We thus see that the Greeks of the early ages knew little of any real people except those to the east and south of their own country, or near the coast of the Mediterranean. Their imagination meantime peopled the western portion of this sea with giants, monsters, and enchantresses; while they placed around the disk of the earth, which they probably regarded as of no great width, nations enjoying the peculiar favor of the gods, and blessed with happiness and longevity.

The Dawn, the Sun, and the Moon were supposed to rise out of the Ocean, on the western side, and to drive through the air, giving light to gods and men. The stars also, except those forming Charles' Wain or Bear, and others near them, rose out of and sank into the stream of Ocean. There the sun-god embarked in a winged boat, which conveyed him round by the northern part of the earth, back to his place of rising in the east. Milton alludes to this in his "Commmus."

"Now the gilded car of day
His golden axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream,
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing towards the other goal
Of his chamber in the east."

The abode of the gods was on the summit of Mount Olympus, in Thessaly. A gate of clouds, kept by the goddesses named the Seasons, opened to permit the passage of the Celestials to earth, and to receive them on their return. The gods had their separate dwellings; but all, when summoned, repaired to the palace of Jupiter [Or Zeus. The relation of these names to each other will be explained on the next page], as did also those deities whose usual abode was the earth, the waters, or the underworld. It was also in the great hall of the palace of the Olympian king that the gods feasted each day on ambrosia and nectar, their food and drink, the latter being handed round by the lovely goddess Hebe. Here they conversed of the affairs of heaven and earth; and as they quaffed their nectar, Apollo, the god of music, delighted them with the tones of his lyre, to which the muses sang in responsive strains. When the sun was set, the gods retired to sleep in their respective dwellings.

The following lines from the *Odyssey* will show how Homer conceived of Olympus:—

"So saying, Minerva, goddess azure-eyed,
Rose to Olympus, the reputed seat
Eternal of the gods, which never storms
Disturb, rains drench, or snow invades, but calm

The expanse and cloudless shines with purest day.
T here the inhabitants divine rejoice
Forever.:" Cowper

Such were the abodes of the gods as the Greeks conceived them. The Romans, before they knew the Greek poetry, seem to have had no definite imagination of such an assembly of gods. But the Roman and Etruscan races were by no means irreligious. They venerated their departed ancestors, and in each family the worship of these ancestors was an important duty. The images of the ancestors were kept in a sacred place, each family observed, at fixed times, memorial rites in their honor, and for these and other religious observances the family hearth was consecrated. The earliest rites of Roman worship are supposed to be connected with such family devotions.

As the Greeks and Romans became acquainted with other nations, they imported their habits of worship, even in early times. It will be remembered that as late as St. Paul's time, he found an altar at Athens "to an unknown god." Greeks and Romans alike were willing to receive from other nations the legends regarding their gods, and to incorporate them as well as they could with their own. It is thus that in the poetical mythology of those nations, which we are now to study, we frequently find a Latin and a Greek name for one imagined divinity. Thus Zeus, of the Greeks, becomes in Latin with the addition of the word pater (a father) [The reader will observe that father is one of the words derived from an Ayan root. Let p and t become rough, as the grammarians say, let p become ph, and t th, and you have phather or father], Jupiter Kronos of the Greeks appears as

"Vulcanus" of the Latins, "Ares" of the Greeks is "Mars" or Mavors of the Latins, "Poseidon" of the Greeks is "Neptunus" of the Latins, "Aphrodite" of the Greeks is "Venus" of the Latins. This variation is not to be confounded with a mere translation, as where "Paulos" of the Greek becomes "Paulus" in Latin, or "Odysseus" becomes "Ulysses," or as when "Pierre" of the French becomes "Peter" in English. What really happened was, that as the Romans, more cultivated than their fathers, found in Greek literature a god of fire and smithery, they transferred his name "Hephaistos" to their own old god "Vulcanus," who had the same duties, and in their after literature the Latin name was used for the stories of Greek and Latin origin.

As the English literature came into being largely on French and Latin models, and as French is but a degraded Latin and retains Latin roots largely, in our older English poets the Latin forms of these names are generally used. In our own generation, with the precision now so much courted, a fashion has come in, of designating Mars by his Greek name of "Ares," Venus by her name of "Aphrodite," and so on. But in this book, as our object is to make familiar the stores of general English literature which refer to such subjects, we shall retain, in general, the Latin names, only calling the attention of the reader to the Greek names, as they appear in Greek authors, and in many writers of the more recent English schools.

The real monarch of the heavens in the mythology of both Greece and Rome is Jupiter (Zeus-pater, father-Jove) [Jove appears to be a word derived from the same root as Zeus, and it appears in the root dev of the Sanscrit, where

devas are gods of different forms. Our English word devil probably comes from the French diable, Italian diavolo, Latin diabolus, one who makes division,- - literally one who separates balls, or throws balls about,— instead of throwing them frankly and truly at the batsman. It is not to be traced to the Sanscrit deva.]

In the mythological system we are tracing Zeus is himself the father of many of the gods, and he is often spoken of as father of gods and men. He is the father of Vulcan [In Greek Hephaistos], of Venus [in Greek Aphrodite], of Minerva [in Greek Pallas Athene, or either name separately], of Apollo [of Phoebus], Diana [in Greek Artemis], and of Mercury [in Greek Hermes], who are ranked among the twelve superior gods, and of many inferior deities. But Jupiter himself is not the original deity in these systems. He is the son of Saturnus, as in the Greek Zeus is the son of Kronos. Still the inevitable question would occur where did Saturnus or Kronos come from. And, in forms and statements more and more vague, the answer was that he was born from Uranus or Ouranos, which is the name of the Heaven over all which seemed to embrace all things. The Greek name of Saturn was spelled Kronos. The Greek name of Time was spelled Chronos. A similarity between the two was imagined. And the whole statement, when reduced to rationalistic language, would be that from Uranus, the infinite, was born Chronos, Time,— that from Time, Zeus or Jupiter was born, and that he is the only child of Time who has complete sway over mortals and immortals.

"The will of Jove I own,
Who mortals and immortals rules alone."

Homer, II.xii

Jupiter was son of Saturn (Kronos) [The names included in parentheses are the Greek, the others being the Roman or Latin names] and Ops (Rhea in Greek, sometimes confounded with the Phrygian Cybele).

Saturn and Rhea were of the race of Titans, who were the children of Earth and Heaven, which sprang from Chaos, of which we shall give a further account in our next chapter.

In allusion to the dethronement of Ouranos by Kronos, and of

Kronos or Saturnus by Zeus or Jupiter, Prometheus says in AEschylus's tragedy,—

"You may deem
Its towers impregnable; but have I not
already seen two monarchs hurled from them."

There is another cosmogony, or account of the creation, according to which Earth, Erebus, and Love were the first of beings. Love (Eros) issued from the egg of Night, which floated on Chaos. By his arrows and torch he pierced and vivified all things, producing life and joy.

Saturn and Rhea were not the only Titans. There were others, whose names were Oceanus, Hyperion, Iapetus, and Ophion, males; and Themis, Mnemosyne, Eurynome, females. They are spoken of as the elder gods, whose dominion was afterwards transferred to others. Saturn yielded to Jupiter, Oceanus to Neptune, Hyperion to Apollo. Hyperion was the father of the Sun, Moon, and Dawn. He is therefore the original sun-god, and is painted with the splendor and beauty which were afterwards bestowed on Apollo.

"Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself." Shakespeare Ophion and Eurynome ruled over Olympus till they were dethroned by Saturn and Rhea. Milton alludes to them in Paradise Lost. He says the heathen seem to have had some knowledge of the temptation and fall of man,—

"And fabled how the serpent, whom they called Ophion, with Eurynome (the wide-Encroaching Eve perhaps), had first the rule Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven."

The representations given of Saturn are not very consistent, for on the one hand his reign is said to have been the golden age of innocence and purity, and on the other he is described as a monster who devoured his own children [This inconsistency arises from considering the Saturn of the Romans the same with the Grecian deity Chronos (Time), which, as it brings an end to all things which have had a beginning, may be said to devour its own offspring.] Jupiter, however, escaped this fate, and when grown up espoused Metis (Prudence), who administered a draught to Saturn which caused him to disgorge his children. Jupiter, with his brothers and sisters, now rebelled against their father Saturn, and his brothers the Titans; vanquished them, and imprisoned some of them in Tartarus, inflicting other penalties on others. Atlas was condemned to bear up the heavens on his shoulders.

On the dethronement of Saturn, Jupiter with his brothers Neptune (Poseidon) and Pluto (Dis) divided his dominions. Jupiter's portion was the heavens, Neptune's the ocean, and Pluto's the realms of the dead. Earth and Olympus were common property. Jupiter was king of gods and men. The

thunder was his weapon, and he bore a shield called AEGis, made for him by Vulcan. The eagle was his favorite bird, and bore his thunderbolts.

Juno (Hera)[pronounce He-re, in two syllables] was the wife of Jupiter, and queen of the gods. Iris, the goddess of the rainbow, was her attendant and messenger. The peacock was her favorite bird.

Vulcan (Hephaistos), the celestial artist, was the son of Jupiter and Juno. He was born lame, and his mother was so displeased at the sight of him that she flung him out of heaven. Other accounts say that Jupiter kicked him out for taking part with his mother, in a quarrel which occurred between them. Vulcan's lameness, according to this account, was the consequence of his fall. He was a whole day falling, and at last alighted in the island of Lemnos, which was thenceforth sacred to him. Milton alludes to this story in Paradise lost, Book I.

"From morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropped from the zenith, like a falling star,
On Lemnos, the AEgean isle."

Mars (Ares), the god of war, was the son of Jupiter and Juno. Phoebus Apollo [this is a Greek name of a Greek divinity, who seems to have had no Roman resemblance], the god of archery, prophecy, and music, was the son of Jupiter and Latona, and brother of Diana (Artemis). He was god of the sun, as Diana, his sister, was the goddess of the moon.

Venus (Aphrodite), the goddess of love and beauty, was the daughter of Jupiter and Dione. Others say that Venus sprang from the foam of the sea. The zephyr wafted her along the waves to the Isle of Cyprus, where she was received and attired by the Seasons, and then led to the assembly of the gods. All were charmed with her beauty, and each one demanded her for his wife. Jupiter gave her to Vulcan, in gratitude for the service he had rendered in forging thunderbolts. So the most beautiful of the goddesses became the wife of the most ill-favored of the gods. Venus possessed an embroidered girdle called the Cestus, which had the power of inspiring love. Her favorite birds were swans and doves, and the plants sacred to her were the rose and the myrtle.

Cupid (Eros), the god of love, was the son of Venus. He was her constant companion; and, armed with bow and arrows, he shot the darts of desire into the bosoms of both gods and men. There was a deity named Anteros, who was sometimes represented as the avenger of slighted love, and sometimes as the symbol of reciprocal affection. The following legend is told of him:—

Venus, complaining to Themis that her son Eros continued always a child, was told by her that it was because he was solitary, and that if he had a brother he would grow apace. Anteros was soon afterwards born, and Eros immediately was seen to increase rapidly in size and strength.

Minerva (Pallas Athene), the goddess of wisdom, was the offspring of Jupiter, without a mother. She sprang from his

head, completely armed. Her favorite bird was the owl, and the plant sacred to her the olive.

Byron, in "Childe Harold," alludes to the birth of Minerva thus:—

"Can tyrants but by tyrants conquered be,
And freedom find no champion and no child,
Such as Columbia saw arise, when she
Sprang forth a Pallas, armed and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourished in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of Cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?"

Mercury (Hermes), was the son of Jupiter and Maia. He presided over commerce, wrestling and other gymnastic exercises; even over thieving, and everything, in short, which required skill and dexterity. He was the messenger of Jupiter, and wore a winged cap and winged shoes. He bore in his hand a rod entwined with two serpents, called the Caduceus.

Mercury is said to have invented the lyre. Four hours after his birth he found the shell of a tortoise, made holes in the opposite edges of it, and drew cords of linen through them, and the instrument was complete [From this origin of the instrument, the word "shell" is often used as synonymous with "lyre," and figuratively for music and poetry. Thus Gray, in his ode on the "Progress of Poesy," says,— "O Sovereign of the willing soul, Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs, Enchanting shell! The sullen Cares And Frantic Passions hear thy soft control."] The cords were

nine, in honor of the nine Muses. Mercury gave the lyre to Apollo, and received from him in exchange the caduceus.

Ceres (Demeter) was the daughter of Saturn and Rhea. She had a daughter named Proserpine (Persephone), who became the wife of Pluto, and queen of the realms of the dead. Ceres presided over agriculture.

Bacchus (Dionysus), the god of wine, was the son of Jupiter and Semele. He represents not only the intoxicating power of wine, but its social and beneficent influences likewise; so that he is viewed as the promoter of civilization, and a lawgiver and lover of peace.

The muses were the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne (Memory). They presided over song, and prompted the memory. They were nine in number, to each of whom was assigned the presidency over some particular department of literature, art, or science. Calliope was the muse of epic poetry, Clio of history, Euterpe of lyric poetry, Melpomene of tragedy, Terpsichore of choral dance and song, Erato of love-poetry, Polyhymnia of sacred poetry, Urania of astronomy, Thalia [Pronounced Tha-lei-a, with the emphasis on the second syllable] of comedy.

Spenser described the office of the Graces thus:—

"These three on men all gracious gifts bestow
Which deck the body or adorn the mind,
To make them lovely or well-favored show;
As comely carriage, entertainment kind,
Sweet semblance, friendly offices that bind,
And all the compliments of courtesy;
They teach us how to each degree and kind

We should ourselves demean, to low, to high.
To friends, to foes; which skill men call Civility."

The Fates were also three Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. Their office was to spin the thread of human destiny, and they were armed with shears, with which they cut it off when they pleased. They were the daughters of Themis (Law), who sits by Jove on his throne to give him counsel.

The Erinnyes, or Furies, were three goddesses who punished crimes by their secret stings. The heads of the Furies were wreathed with serpents, and their whole appearance was terrific and appalling. Their names were Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megaera. They were also called Eumenides.

Nemesis was also an avenging goddess. She represents the righteous anger of the gods, particularly towards the proud and insolent.

Pan [the name Pan means everything, and he is sometimes spoken of as the god of all nature] was the god of flocks and shepherds.

His favorite residence, as the Greeks describe him, was in Arcadia.

The Satyrs were deities of the woods and fields. They were conceived to be covered with bristly hair, their heads decorated with short, sprouting horns, and their feet like goats' feet.

Momus was the god of laughter, and Plutus the god of wealth.

ROMAN DIVINITIES

The preceding are Grecian divinities, though received also by the Romans. Those which follow are peculiar to Roman mythology.

Saturn was an ancient Italian deity. The Roman poets tried to identify him with the Grecian god Kronos, and fabled that after his dethronement by Jupiter, he fled to Italy, where he reigned during what was called the Golden Age. In memory of his beneficent dominion, the feast of Saturnalia was held every year in the winter season. Then all public business was suspended, declarations of war and criminal executions were postponed, friends made presents to one another, and the slaves were indulged with great liberties. A feast was given them at which they sat at table, while their masters served them, to show the natural equality of men, and that all things belonged equally to all, in the reign of Saturn.

Faunus [there was also a goddess called Fauna, or Bona Dea], the grandson of Saturn, was worshipped as the god of fields and shepherds, and also as a prophetic god. His name in the plural, Fauns, expressed a class of gamesome deities, like the Satyrs of the Greeks.

Quirinus was a war god, said to be no other than Romulus the founder of Rome, exalted after his death to a place among the gods.

Bellona, a war goddess.

Terminus, the god of landmarks. His statue was a rude stone or post, set in the ground to mark the boundaries of fields.

Pales, the goddess presiding over cattle and pastures.

Pomona presided over fruit trees.

Flora, the goddess of flowers.

Lucina, the goddess of childbirth.

Vesta (the Hestia of the Greeks) was a deity presiding over the public and private hearth. A sacred fire, tended by six virgin priestesses called Vestals, flamed in her temple. As the safety of the city was held to be connected with its conservation, the neglect of the virgins, if they let it go out, was severely punished, and the fire was rekindled from the rays of the sun.

Liber is another Latin name of Bacchus; and Mulciber of Vulcan.

Janus was the porter of heaven. He opens the year, the first month being named after him. He is the guardian deity of gates, on which account he is commonly represented with two heads, because every door looks two ways. His temples at Rome were numerous. In war time the gates of the principal one were always open. In peace they were closed; but they were shut only once between the reign of Numa and that of Augustus.

The Penates were the gods who were supposed to attend to the welfare and prosperity of the family. Their name is derived from Penus, the pantry, which was sacred to them. Every master of a family was the priest to the Penates of his own house.

The Lares, or Lars, were also household gods, but differed from the Penates in being regarded as the deified spirits of mortals. The family Lars were held to be the souls of the ancestors, who watched over and protected their

descendants. The words Lemur and Larva more nearly correspond to our word Ghost.

The Romans believed that every man had his Genius, and every woman her Juno; that is, a spirit who had given them being, and was regarded as a protector through life. On birthdays men made offerings to their Genius, women to their Juno.

Macaulay thus alludes to some of the Roman gods:—

"Pomona loves the orchard,
And Liber loves the vine,
And Pales loves the straw-built shed
Warm with the breath of kine;
And Venus loves the whisper
Of plighted youth and maid
In April's ivory moonlight,
Beneath the Chestnut shade."
"Prophecy of Capys."

N.B. It is to be observed that in proper names the final e and es are to be sounded. Thus Cybele and Penates are words of three syllables. But Proserpine and Thebes have been so long used as English words, that they may be regarded as exceptions, to be pronounced as if English. Hecate is sometimes pronounced by the poets as a dissyllable. In the Index at the close of the volume, we shall mark the accented syllable, in all words which appear to require it.

CHAPTER II

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Prometheus and Pandora

The Roman poet Ovid gives us a connected narrative of creation. Before the earth and sea and the all-covering heaven, one aspect, which we call Chaos, covered all the face of Nature,— a rough heap of inert weight and discordant beginnings of things clashing together. As yet no sun gave light to the world, nor did the moon renew her slender horn month by month,— neither did the earth hang in the surrounding air, poised by its own weight,— nor did the sea stretch its long arms around the earth. Wherever there was earth, there was also sea and air. So the earth was not solid nor was the water fluid, neither was the air transparent.

God and Nature at last interposed and put an end to this discord, separating earth from sea, and heaven from both. The fiery part, being the lightest, sprang up, and formed the skies; the air was next in weight and place. The earth, being heavier, sank below, and the water took the lowest place and buoyed up the earth.

Here some god, no man knows who, arranged and divided the land. He placed the rivers and bays, raised mountains and dug out valleys and distributed woods, fountains, fertile fields and stony plains. Now that the air was clear the stars shone out, the fishes swam the sea and birds flew in the air, while the four-footed beasts roamed around the earth. But a nobler animal was needed, and man was made in the image of the gods with an upright stature [The two Greek words for man have the root an, "up"], so that while all other animals turn their faces downward and

look to the earth, he raises his face to heaven and gazes on the stars [Every reader will be interested in comparing this narrative with that in the beginning of Genesis. It seems clear that so many Jews were in Rome in Ovid's days, many of whom were people of consideration among those with whom he lived, that he may have heard the account in the Hebrew Scriptures translated. Compare JUDAISM by Prof. Frederic Huidekoper.]

To Prometheus the Titan and to his brother Epimetheus was committed the task of making man and all other animals, and of endowing them with all needful faculties. This Epimetheus did, and his brother overlooked the work. Epimetheus then gave to the different animals their several gifts of courage, strength, swiftness and sagacity. He gave wings to one, claws to another, a shelly covering to the third. Man, superior to all other animals, came last. But for man Epimetheus had nothing,— he had bestowed all his gifts elsewhere. He came to his brother for help, and Prometheus, with the aid of Minerva, went up to heaven, lighted his torch at the chariot of the sun, and brought down fire to man. With this, man was more than equal to all other animals. Fire enabled him to make weapons to subdue wild beasts, tools with which to till the earth. With fire he warmed his dwelling and bid defiance to the cold.

Woman was not yet made. The story is, that Jupiter made her, and sent her to Prometheus and his brother, to punish them for their presumption in stealing fire from heaven; and man, for accepting the gift. The first woman was named Pandora. She was made in heaven, every god contributing something to perfect her. Venus gave her beauty, Mercury

persuasion, Apollo music. Thus equipped, she was conveyed to earth, and presented to Epimetheus, who gladly accepted her, though cautioned by his brother to beware of Jupiter and his gifts. Epimetheus had in his house a jar, in which were kept certain noxious articles, for which, in fitting man for his new abode, he had had no occasion. Pandora was seized with an eager curiosity to know what this jar contained; and one day she slipped off the cover and looked in. Forthwith there escaped a multitude of plagues for hapless man,— such as gout, rheumatism, and colic for his body, and envy, spite, and revenge for his mind,— and scattered themselves far and wide. Pandora hastened to replace the lid; but, alas! The whole contents of the jar had escaped, one thing only excepted, which lay at the bottom, and that was HOPE. So we see at this day, whatever evils are abroad, hope never entirely leaves us; and while we have THAT, no amount of other ills can make us completely wretched.

Another story is, that Pandora was sent in good faith, by Jupiter, to bless man; that she was furnished with a box, containing her marriage presents, into which every god had put some blessing. She opened the box incautiously, and the blessings all escaped, HOPE only excepted. This story seems more consistent than the former; for how could HOPE, so precious a jewel as it is, have been kept in a jar full of all manner of evils?

The world being thus furnished with inhabitants, the first age was an age of innocence and happiness, called the GOLDEN AGE. Truth and right prevailed, though not enforced by law, nor was there any magistrate to threaten or punish.

The forest had not yet been robbed of its trees to furnish timbers for vessels, nor had men built fortifications round their towns. There were no such things as swords, spears, or helmets. The earth brought forth all things necessary for man, without his labor in ploughing or sowing. Perpetual spring reigned, flowers sprang up without seed, the rivers flowed with milk and wine, and yellow honey distilled from the oaks.

"But when good Saturn, banished from above,
Was driven to hell, the world was under Jove.
Succeeding times a Silver Age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excelled by gold.
Then summer, autumn, winter did appear,
And spring was but a season of the year.
The sun his annual course obliquely made,
Good days contracted and enlarged the bad,
Then air, with sultry heats, began to glow;
The wings of winds were clogged with ice and snow
And shivering mortals into houses driven,
Sought shelter from the inclemency of heaven.
Those houses then were caves, or homely sheds;
With twining osiers fenced; and moss their beds.
Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows broke,
And oxen labored first beneath the yoke.
To this came next in course the Brazen Age:
A warlike offspring, prompt to bloody rage,
Not impious yet! . . .
. . . Hard Steel succeeded then;
And stubborn as the metal were the men."
Ovid's Metam, Book I. Dryden's Translation.

Crime burst in like a flood; modesty, truth, and honor fled. In their places came fraud and cunning, violence, and the wicked love of gain. Then seamen spread sails to the wind, and the trees were torn from the mountains to serve for keels to ships, and vex the face of ocean. The earth, which till now had been cultivated in common, began to be divided off into possessions. Men were not satisfied with what the surface produced, but must dig into its bowels, and draw forth from thence the ores of metals. Mischievous IRON, and more mischievous GOLD, were produced. War sprang up, using both as weapons; the guest was not safe in his friend's house; and sons-in-law and fathers-in-law, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, could not trust one another. Sons wished their fathers dead, that they might come to the inheritance; family love lay prostrate. The earth was wet with slaughter, and the gods abandoned it, one by one, till Astraea [the goddess of innocence and purity. After leaving earth, she was placed among the stars, where she became the constellation Virgo The Virgin. Themis (Justice) was the mother of Astraea. She is represented as holding aloft a pair of scales, in which she weighs the claims of opposing parties. It was a favorite idea of the old poets, that these goddesses would one day return, and bring back the Golden Age. Even in a Christian Hymn, the Messiah of Pope, this idea occurs.

"All crimes shall cease, and ancient fraud shall fail,
Returning Justice lift aloft her scale,
Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend." See,
also,

Milton's Hymn on the nativity, stanzas xiv, and xv] alone was left, and finally she also took her departure.

Jupiter, seeing this state of things, burned with anger. He summoned the gods to council. They obeyed the call, and took The road to the palace of heaven. The road, which any one may see in a clear night, stretches across the face of the sky, and is called the Milky Way. Along the road stand the palaces of the illustrious gods; the common people of the skies live apart, on either side. Jupiter addressed the assembly. He set forth the frightful condition of things on the earth, and closed by announcing his intention to destroy the whole of its inhabitants, and provide a new race, unlike the first, who would be more worthy of life, and much better worshippers of the gods. So saying he took a thunderbolt, and was about to launch it at the world, and destroy it by burning it; but recollecting the danger that such a conflagration might set heaven itself on fire, he changed his plan, and resolved to drown the world. Aquilo, the north wind, which scatters the clouds, was chained up; Notus, the south, was sent out, and soon covered all the face of heaven with a cloak of pitchy darkness. The clouds, driven together, resound with a crash; torrents of rain fall; the crops are laid low; the year's labor of the husbandman perishes in an hour. Jupiter, not satisfied with his own waters, calls on his brother Neptune to aid him with his. He lets loose the rivers, and pours them over the land. At the same time, he heaves the land with an earthquake, and brings in the reflux of the ocean over the shores. Flocks, herds, men, and houses are swept away, and temples, with

their sacred enclosures, profaned. If any edifice remained standing, it was overwhelmed, and its turrets lay hid beneath the waves. Now all was sea; sea without shore. Here and there some one remained on a projecting hill-top, and a few, in boats, pulled the oar where they had lately driven the plough. The fishes swim among the tree-tops; the anchor is let down into a garden. Where the graceful lambs played but now, unwieldy sea-calves gambol. The wolf swims among the sheep; the yellow lions and tigers struggle in the water. The strength of the wild boar serves him not, nor his swiftness the stag. The birds fall with weary wing into the water, having found no land for a resting place. Those living beings whom the water spared fell a prey to hunger.

Parnassus alone, of all the mountains, overtopped the waves; and there Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha, of the race of Prometheus, found refuge he a just man, and she a faithful worshipper of the gods. Jupiter, when he saw none left alive but this pair, and remembered their harmless lives and pious demeanor, ordered the north winds to drive away the clouds, and disclose the skies to earth, and earth to the skies. Neptune also directed Triton to blow on his shell, and sound a retreat to the waters. The waters obeyed, and the sea returned to its shores, and the rivers to their channels. Then Deucalion thus addressed Pyrrha: "O wife, only surviving woman, joined to me first by the ties of kindred and marriage, and now by a common danger, would that we possessed the power of our ancestor Prometheus, and could renew the race as he at first made it! But as we cannot, let us seek yonder temple, and inquire of the gods what